

PRESS RELEASE

The Cobra Museum presents the exhibition *The other story: Moroccan Modernism*

Amstelveen, 11 March 2022 –

From 14 April to 18 September 2022, the Cobra Museum of Modern Art in Amstelveen will present the highly diverse exhibition *The Other Story: Moroccan Modernism*. The exhibition is curated by writer and art lover Abdelkader Benali. He selected over 100 works, of which a major part is of the collection of the Museum Mohammed VI for modern and contemporary art, Rabat Morocco, supplemented with works by (contemporary) artists from Morocco and Europe. They tell the story of modern Moroccan art, from the independence of Morocco in 1956 to the present day. Besides art, there is also a varied programme of activities for visitors.

The Other Story, the title of the exhibition, refers to the relatively unknown character of Moroccan modern art in the Netherlands. Abdelkader Benali: 'The exhibition starts in the year 1956, the year Morocco became independent and with it the country's art academies. It meant a cultural turning point.' This is reflected in the selection of the exhibited works, as well as in the activities programming: lectures, cooking workshops and *Soirees Marocaines*. It transcends the traditional image of Moroccan art and culture. The exhibition shows how pioneers of the first hour were influenced by, among others, the Cobra movement, in whose work freedom and fantasy were important characteristics.'



Sarah Amrani, Untitled 1 - Oujda series, 2019 © Courtesy of the Artist



*Mohamed Drissi, Untitled, 1986
© Collection ministère de la culture disponible au Musée Mohammed VI*

European Moroccans

The exhibition also focuses on Moroccan artists who have left Morocco. Working in Europe, they draw on an extraordinary array of influences to create works that place themes of cultural mixing, decolonisation and displacement in a distinctive perspective. Never before has such a remarkable group of artists with a Moroccan background been brought together in the Netherlands.

International exchange of cultural knowledge

This unique exhibition could not have been realised without the Museum Mohammed VI for modern and contemporary art (MMVI). But it is not just Moroccan art coming to the Netherlands; the Cobra Museum is also lending part of its collection to the MMVI. The exhibition *Cobra: A Multi-headed Snake* will be on show in Rabat in October of 2023. This exhibition was part of an international exchange before. In 2019, it was shown at the National Museum of Modern Art in Mexico City, where the exhibition attracted as many as 135,000 visitors.

Furthermore, the Cobra Museum is working with the Reinwardt Academy in Amsterdam on a project commissioned by the Dutch Embassy that focuses on collaboration with the *Fondation Nationale des Musées du Maroc*. The aim is to set up a pilot for a multi-year exchange programme on museum management matters in a broad sense: from, for example, conservation and management of collections to education and interpretation, and from marketing to the development of public-oriented exhibitions or front-of-house staff management. Collaboration on an equal basis, with mutual knowledge exchange. This exchange programme is run together with DutchCulture and the Cultural Heritage Agency.



Fatima Zohra-Serri, L'origine du monde, 2018 © Courtesy of the artist

Note to editors:

The press preview of *The Other Story* will take place on **Wednesday 13 April from 10 to 12 Pm**. Guest curator Abdelkader Benali will give an introduction to the exhibition, after which you can visit the exhibition. Later this month, you will receive a personal invitation for this press preview with an extensive programme.

If you have any questions or interview requests, please contact us.

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